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RESIST

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A Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority

April 1999

Reaching Out Across the Mountains

LARRY WILSON

Poverty pays if you ain't poor" —This was one description used by poet/writer/activist Don West to describe the state of the Central Appalachian coalfields. The region includes the entire state of West Virginia, Kentucky's eastern-most counties and smaller portions of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia and Tennessee. It contains the nation's greatest natural resources—including high quality coal, oil, gas, timber and water. Appalachia is also home to some of the nation's poorest, most powerless and exploited people. Unemployment rates are disproportionately high. The illiteracy rate is often 50% or greater. The economy is based on extracting non-renewable resources and exporting these outside the region.

The rich and powerful that became so by (at least in part) exploiting the resources and people of Central Appalachia are too numerous to list. A few of the names are John D. Rockefeller, John Jacob Astor, Henry Ford, George C. Westevelt (partner of William E. Boeing), the Mellon Family, Warren Delano, Albert Gore (father of the liberal environmentalist and Vice President Al Gore), Franklin D. Rockefeller and Armand Hammer.

Home of the War on Poverty

The plight of the people of the Central Appalachian Mountains was drawn to the nation's attention by John F. Kennedy while he was campaigning for President.



Mine entrances like this one mark the hills of West Virginia.
Photo courtesy of Appalachian Focus

After Kennedy's assassination, Lyndon Johnson continued to implement his policies and began the infamous "War on Poverty" programs in the 1960s. The Central Appalachian coal producing counties in the region initially drew all the attention. However, state and congressional leaders from other states scammed to add their jurisdictions into this area in order to receive special federal initiatives. So the current definition which describes Appalachia as beginning in the southern tier of counties in New York and follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains into the northeast counties of Mississippi was adopted. This definition diluted the resources targeted to assist in the region. It also diluted the statistics. Instantly the per capita income of the residents of the Central Appa-

lachian region was averaged in with their more affluent neighbors—as were the unemployment rates and illiteracy rates—resulting in immediate statistical improvement. As federal assistance has rolled into the region, the gap between the residents of Central Appalachia and the rest of the region widened, while the gap between Central Appalachia and the rest of the nation remained more or less consistent.

In addition to the War on Poverty, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) set up programs to "help" the people in Appalachia. The ARC prioritized improving the infrastructure and built lots of roads. This is a real boon to the industries that extract resources. It makes it much easier, quicker and less expensive to transport the timber, coal, etc. outside of the area to feed the higher paying jobs in other regions.

The words Don West used in 1969 to explain the impact of this extraction of the region's resources are still applicable today:

If we native mountaineers can now determine to organize and save ourselves, save our mountains from the spoilers who tear them down, pollute our streams

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and leave grotesque areas of ugliness, there is hope. The billionaire families behind the great corporations are also outsiders who sometimes claim they want to "save" us. It is time that we hill folk should understand and appreciate our heritage, stand up like those who were our ancestors, develop our own self-identity. It is time to realize that nobody from the outside is ever going to save us from bad conditions unless we make our own stand."

The ARC is still building roads to help the corporations move the products of their destruction quicker and cheaper.

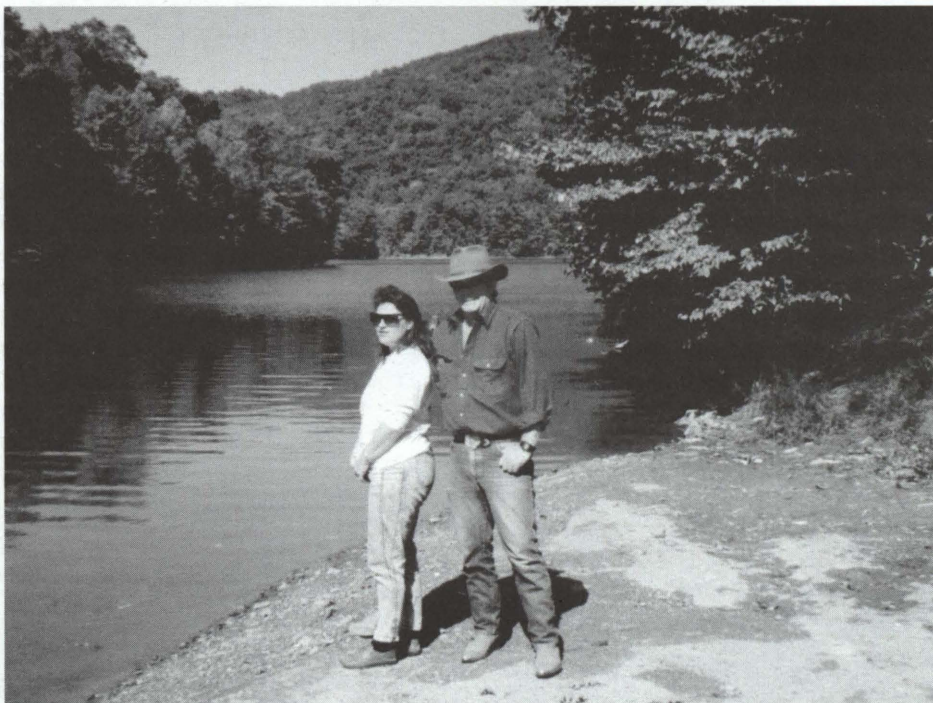
Appalachian Focus on Organizing

But there is hope—in 1997 several persons in the coal-producing counties of Central Appalachia came together to discuss this history of failed attempts to bring change and to begin a new effort. The concepts were simple. Any effort must be designed, developed and implemented by those persons most immediately affected by the problems being addressed. They must connect every problem being faced into the larger context of Appalachia. The culture, history and people of Appalachia must be uplifted and become a source of pride and strength. Central Appalachians must build a network of Central Appalachians across states and then reach out for solidarity to similarly exploited peoples outside of the region. On these principles, Appalachian Focus was formed.

Appalachian Focus' approach is to assist existing groups in working on current issues. This assistance uses participatory research and popular education techniques. There is a strong emphasis on building a network of community-based activists.

Editor's correction:

In the February/March issue of the *Newsletter*, Jim O'Brien was mistakenly listed beneath the "In memory of" gifts, rather than in his proper "in honor of" position. When this was pointed out to Jim, he said, "I always knew my memory was good, but why would someone donate to Resist for that reason?" Resist is pleased to report that Jim is in fine health, and has taken the news of this untimely notice very well.



Appalachian groups continue to organize in hopes of maintaining the beauty and resources of their region. *Photo courtesy of Appalachian Focus*

Appalachian Focus has conducted eight workshops teaching community activists to use the internet for communication and research, overcome barriers to communication between community representatives and government/institutional entities, and to more effectively interact with national non-governmental organizations.

There is a long history of organizations reaching into Appalachia and offering assistance—there is no history of groups within Appalachia reaching outside of the region asking for types of assistance that has been identified by the residents of the region. Appalachian Focus is attempting to reverse this history.

Warren Wright from Letcher County, Kentucky said, "It is difficult for the people of Appalachia to speak collectively and to be heard. We have no advocates, no churchmen, no elected representatives to speak for us. As social units, these groups are more apt to speak against us. We must, therefore, understand that we will only be heard by American society and even by our fellows in Appalachia as we find the means and, God willing, the courage to speak as a united people."

Appalachian Focus is currently assisting with groups trying to prevent a coal company from removing the top of Black Mountain (the highest point in Kentucky) to mine coal (see the following article on

page three); assisting many local volunteers in assessing the water quality in the

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For information and grant guidelines, write to: Resist, 259 Elm St., Suite 201
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Upper Cumberland River Watershed; providing orientation to student volunteers who are serving internships with community groups to assist in combating environmental problems; helping citizens try

to prevent school closings and consolidation that would cause children to be bused over 20 miles one-way through coal truck infested, narrow roads. The problems are many, the resources few, but the determination of the people is inspirational.

Larry Wilson is the director of Appalachian Focus. Appalachian Focus received a grant from Resist in 1998. For more information, contact them at Route 2 Box 68AA, Middlesboro, KY 40965.

Hoping *Not* to Move Mountains

LARRY WILSON

The Cumberland Mountain range in Southeast Kentucky contains the most diverse forest ecosystem in eastern North America. Black Mountain in Harlan County is the tallest of the mountains in the range and in the state. It is the only place in Kentucky where the elevation is in excess of 3,600 feet above sea level. According to the Kentucky Biodiversity Council's publication, *Kentucky Alive*, the mountain has never been systematically studied. The limited research that has been done shows the following: "The area supports a type of northern hardwood forest community found nowhere else in the state (and possibly unique in North America), the flora and fauna are exceptionally rich, and numerous rare species occur here, some of which are found nowhere else in Kentucky. It is, perhaps, the most unique assemblage of biodiversity remaining in Kentucky."

Black Mountain has long been cherished as a unique ecological and biological resource, because of its elevation and the unique species composition arrayed at the higher elevations, and because of the diversity of species. A Comprehensive Protection Plan developed by the Kentucky Nature Preserves Commission for U.S. Steel, which formerly held interests on Black Mountain, recognized the importance of Black Mountain with these words:

Big Black Mountain, reaching an elevation of 4,150 feet is the highest point in the Commonwealth and may very well be Kentucky's most significant ecosystem. . . . This mountain, with its unique plants and wildlife and sweeping panoramas, is an important part of the cultural and natural heritage of the region. Because of its altitude, it serves as a refugium for some of the state's rarest organisms, making the area extremely important to the preservation of



Mountain top removal digs shortens mountains by hundreds of feet and deposits the leftover soil into hallows. *Photo courtesy of Appalachian Focus*

Kentucky's natural diversity.

Now Jericol Mining, Inc. wants to literally cut off the top of Black Mountain to extract the coal deposited there. According to Jericol's permit application, their proposed method removes the mountain from the top of a coal seam, thus exposing the coal and permitting large machines to literally scoop up the coal and load it onto trucks. In the process, an average of 250 feet of the mountain will be completely removed—more in some places, less in others. Regulators and coal company spokespersons call the portion of the mountain that is removed "overburden." This material is routinely dumped into the hollow between two mountains in a process called "hollow fill." This area is then "reclaimed" by sowing a mixture of exotic and native grasses with liquid, green-colored fertilizer. The black locust and yellow pine trees that may also be planted cannot create humus

in sufficient quality or quantity to produce humus similar to that which was destroyed in the mining process. These species are used simply because they are about all that will grow in the poor material that has been substituted for soil.

Numerous Appalachian community organizations, including Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Kentucky Resource Council, Appalachia Focus, and others, are fighting the mountain top removal. Kentuckians for the Commonwealth filed a petition to designate Black Mountain as Lands Unsuitable for Mining (LUM) in December 1998. Other activists and residents are signing on as interveners.

For more information, contact Kentuckians for the Commonwealth at 606/573-9654, or Larry Wilson at Appalachian Focus, appfocus@eastky.net.

VBLA Seeks Miners' Health Benefits

MARILYN CARROLL

Central Appalachia is a nation of storytellers, and coal miners tell some of the best. In my eleven years with Virginia Black Lung Association (VBLA), the pay has usually been terrible. But an outstanding perk—one that could almost keep me motivated solely on its own—is the on-the-job education.

I have heard miners describe what it's like to crawl in and out of the blades of a massive mining plow trying to find the source of its malfunction in total darkness—unable to see their buddies no more than six feet away through the thick dust.

I heard about pick and shovel days, when the miner got paid by the ton or by the railroad car that he loaded. All of our members sing—actually, howl is a better description—Ernie Ford's "Sixteen Tons" more with passion than with melody. They elaborate in detail on the literally back-breaking hard work and the owing of soul to the company store. In the 1950s, during a regional depression that they claim was as bad as the 1930s, some of them worked a day at a time for a voucher to a grocery store. . . company owned, of course.

Miners talk of watching the ever-present rats ("They're bigger down there, you know. You got to be careful how you store your lunch bucket.") to know if there is danger of a roof fall: "When the rats start swarming out, you better leave."

Dozens of times I heard about coerced falsification of the dust sample. "If you wanted to keep your job, you stored the dust sample in the lunch hole." Routinely the coal companies tampered with the samples so they wouldn't be shut down for dust violations in the constant conflict of production versus health and safety. This scandal was not exposed until 1993 and it emphatically contradicted the lie that the mines were then clean.

As VBLA assisted with individual claims, we recorded the work histories of sick men in an effort to claim benefits for occupationally caused lung disease. I heard from retired miners who no longer could breathe without medication and oxygen about the dusty conditions they had worked in. In all the stories, miners talked

about dust so thick they couldn't see more than a foot in front of them. They could not, however, win their black lung benefits.

Mining and Lung Disease

Black lung disease (pneumoconiosis) is an occupationally caused progressive, incurable disease that continues its debilitation of the miner even after employment ends. He or she will eventually die from lung complications or heart disease caused by coal dust exposure (Ref. Black Lung Act, 1970). The most telling symptom is extreme shortness of breath. By the age of 60 the miner will have to rest after walking 300 feet at best on level ground. Former miners sleep on three pillows at night, but still wake in the middle of the night gasping for air. Throughout all my work and life in a coal mining community, I know of no coal miner beyond the age of 55 who does not have the disease. Most exhibit some symptoms by the age of 47.

Virginia Black Lung Association began in January 1988 with a meeting of 32 disabled coal miners and family members, including adult children, who were frustrated by the 1981 regulations enacted by the federal government. These laws resulted in only a 3% approval rate for black lung benefits, although the same miners failed their pulmonary physical exams to continue working in the mines because of their lung disease. The coal companies claimed that the dust level was too low to cause disease.

Enraged miners contrasted the national approval rate of 3% for black lung benefits with the fact that coal companies were at their highest production and profit level. The wealth of this region was—and is—exported, taking the profits out of the region from which it came. Coal companies do not pay income tax due to generous governmental tax write-offs (Ref. Consolidated Coal Co. Annual Report). The annual per capita income in the region is \$8,100.

It was the vigorous consensus at that first meeting in 1988 to have a dues paying membership. Within two weeks of the meeting, individuals were anxiously calling our chairman at home for "cards"—membership forms. Individual recruitment led us to 200 members within six months. In three years, we covered a 7500 square mile area—

the five coal mining counties of Virginia—and in 1999 have about 2,100 members.

Gaining Strength and Power

At first, VBLA looked like a therapy group. Mining is dangerous work; pride is important. Men who were used to thinking of themselves as a valued part of the company were wondering what they had done individually to deserve rejection. By telling their individual stories, the members learned that all had experienced the same kind of rejection when their occupationally caused illness became obvious.

Members of VBLA expressed frustration and a sense of worthlessness because they had so little formal education. This lack of education was hardly an accident in a one-industry region where education and involvement in the political structure were discouraged. "Being uneducated and dumb" got to be such a refrain in meetings that finally one of the miner's wives raised her hand and said, "I make a motion that there are no dumb miners in this organization." The motion carried with laughter, and the refrain ceased.

Members soon began to look at their strengths. We could talk well. No one in the country understands mining conditions like miners. And there is one strength that grows out of living in an industrial monopoly, and it is the equivalent of a political science post graduate education: every individual in that one-industry world understands its global connections. For example, a no-nonsense grandmother living in a remote ridge an hour from the nearest town explained to me how the oil companies' ownership of coal corporations meant that they could manipulate prices all over the world. She used examples from Australia and Turkey.

To educate and organize ourselves, VBLA members draw heavily on the principle of mutual self help. Semi-literate miners who quit school in the second and third grade for work taught themselves to read by filling membership cards while they recruited. Women and men learned to speak to other organizations and to master a sound byte on local TV. At membership meetings, VBLA organized a "lobbying

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101" training. In groups of three, members then talked with a Congressman, took notes and reported findings to a committee. Now VBLA members do all their own recruitment, grass roots fund raising, media work and legislative advocacy.

The heart of our association is the membership meeting, held now in four sites each month. We work on health education and on advocacy in all the meetings. It is the forum for asking questions and for educating each other. We know that our efforts improve the chances of individual claims, and our public education also prepares dis-

abled miners to fight more effectively for a successful claim. Currently the national approval rate for black lung claims is 7%; VBLA's approval rate runs at 65%.

The work of VBLA has helped unite a grassroots group across a huge region. But we know that we are a part of an even larger group of grassroots organizations with the same justice goals. The biggest success of VBLA is our membership. VBLA Chairman Calvin Dunford returned from a meeting with two other organizations with a report in hand. For the first time, he had taken written notes! He was explaining some of the new information the other organiza-

tions' leadership had brought to their members. He said, "All of our people know this. We have known it for a while. Our members are educated." That was a heartening indicator of success in reaching at least one important goal . . . maybe the most important one.

Marilyn Carroll grew up in east Tennessee and has been the director of the Virginia Black Lung Association since 1988. VBLA received a grant from Resist in 1998. For more information, contact VBLA, PO Box 1760, Richlands, VA 24641.

Reflections of an Appalachian Activist

GAYE EVANS

Franki Patton Rutherford directs Big Creek People in Action in West Virginia and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Appalachian Community Fund. Gaye Evans, director of the ACF, interviewed Franki at her home. The following is a brief summary of their conversation.

How did you become involved in activism in McDowell County?

FRANKI: I was born to activism. McDowell County is the southernmost county of West Virginia. It's part of the West Virginia coal fields. About 100 years ago, after my family had their land taken away by the coal company, my granddad Jim Harmon became a union organizer. My granddad always believed that you should have good pay for a good job. The coal industry at the turn of the century did not do that, so he was one of the first people that began to work to try to make that industry a more just industry. My father was also a union organizer and leader in the 40s, 50s, and 60s.

Did you follow in his footsteps?

FRANKI: I didn't work for the organizing part of the union. Instead I worked to help miners and their families get the health benefits they should have had under their contract. I worked with a lot of retired coal miners whose health had been destroyed



Franki Patton Rutherford holds an award for Big Creek People in Action. Photo courtesy of the Appalachian Community Fund

by mining. From black lung?

FRANKI: Black lung and everything. After you mine for awhile it just destroys your body. I worked with a lot of the older coal miners who gave their lives to that industry and to the success of this country. Very little is said about the contributions of coal mining to the success of this country from the 1930s to the 1970s. Coal really was the foundation of the success of this country.

Because of the industrial base of it?

FRANKI: We built this country on the back of coal and steel—infrastructure, bridges, you name it. And McDowell County produced the highest levels of coal

in the world. When people talk about giving Appalachia and McDowell County "handouts" I say: you're not giving us a handout! You took billions of dollars of our resources, and if you gave every one of us \$100,000 a year till the day we die, this country would not repay us for what we've given to this country.

When the steel mills started shutting down in Pennsylvania and Ohio, that didn't have as much impact as what happened in the 1950s, when coal companies mechanized the mines. We went from hand lading to machine lading to even larger machines—so you could mine as much coal with five or six people as it used to take for 50 people.

McDowell County right now is still the third leading coal producer in this country, but it provides no employment, and it provides no revenue to the tax base. We are still mining coal, but the people of the area are not benefiting from the coal that's being mined through mechanization.

What is Big Creek People in Action?

FRANKI: Big Creek People in Action opened its doors in April of 1989. Big Creek District lost more in the 1980s than any other part of McDowell County. McDowell County as a whole was devastated by the demise of the coal industry: between 1980 and 1990, we lost 40% of the population. Probably six or eight schools closed, and every coal mine closed. Every one.

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Spreading the Word in Coal Country

KRISTIN LAYNG SZAKOS

The mythical picture of Appalachia has the mountains peopled with rugged individualists, kept from progress by their isolation from one another and from the "outside" world. As with most persistent myths, there is a grain of truth to it. Individualism and isolation have been among the forces that have shaped the culture of the mountains. But throughout the region's history, there has also been a strong tradition of people coming together to work for justice—through churches, unions and, more recently, grassroots organizations, regional networks and a publication called the *Appalachian Reader*.

Organizing is hard in the mountains. Poor roads and rugged terrain make travel difficult. High rates of illiteracy and poverty keep many from fully participating. In many areas, large coal companies own most of the land and supply most of the jobs. Groups who oppose them are made to feel disloyal to their own neighbors, and without support, can feel alone in their struggle.

And the fact that there are others all over the region fighting similar fights is something you would never guess by watching the news on TV and reading local papers.

Creating Media and Connection

It was this sense of isolation that a small group of community activists hoped to combat with the *Appalachian Reader*. The *Reader* started publication in 1988 as the brainchild of folks involved in community organizations in Kentucky and West Virginia. At that time, the old Appalachian Alliance, which had gathered mountain organizers yearly since 1977, had officially disbanded after a few years of inactivity. There were few opportunities for folks to come together to learn about each other's work.

Gatherings continued on a smaller scale at the Highlander Center and the Commission on Religion in Appalachia. Citizens groups in Kentucky and Tennessee were beginning to cross state lines to work with one another, and the Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes was holding multi-state meetings for people dealing with issues of garbage and toxins.

It was this sense of isolation that activists hoped to combat with the *Appalachian Reader*.

The individuals who formed the *Appalachian Reader* had recently attended meetings where local folks were learning for the first time that people all over the region were dealing locally with similar issues. Small communities in eastern Kentucky and southern Ohio had realized they were fighting landfills and garbage incinerators run by the same company. (They were later able to combine information they had found about this company to get the projects stopped.) People whose land had been destroyed by strip mining in West Virginia met folks from Kentucky in the same situation, and they began to give each other advice and support. Rural coalfield residents met with urban poor people in Lexington and Knoxville and recognized their common goals. Folks working to clean up rivers and streams in North Carolina offered technical advice to residents of watersheds in other states.

Not everyone could attend these workshops and benefit from the shared knowledge. Most activists in the mountains had their work cut out for them at home. Founders of the *Appalachian Reader* envisioned it as a publication that regular folks could use to keep up with each other's work, to be inspired by each other's successes and learn from each other's defeats.

Today the *Reader* is the only regular source of news about community organizing throughout the region, and it serves "grassroots" people working for social change. The *Reader* offers information about resources available in the region—funding sources, books, academic and government studies—that could help local groups do their work better. It serves as a clearinghouse of information about upcoming events, job openings in community organizing, and news of staff and leaders in different groups.

Over the years, its pages have documented the work by coalfield residents to wrest control of their land from corporations which owned the mineral rights under their homes, and the struggles of rural communities to keep their land from becoming a dumping ground for out-of-state garbage and toxic waste. Articles have given witness to the countless small and large citizens organizations that have come together to fight for the rights of poor, young, old, disabled, gay and working people.

Every day new groups come together to address local or regional issues of education, economic development, gay and lesbian rights and welfare reform; new people become energized to work for change as old-timers continue to organize and educate. As they reach across county and state boundaries they strengthen their own work at home.

Today, there are many more regional networks than there were 11 years ago. A co-op of community organizations in several mountain and southern states formed last year to work on ways they can cooperate in strategic planning, technical development and fundraising. And the recently-growing movement against mountaintop removal (see article on page three) in West Virginia has grown to encompass Kentucky and neighboring states as well.

The hope for the future of mountain communities lies in movements like these. These are not top-down organizations hoping to help poor Appalachian people respond to problems. Rather, they are organizations of mountain people who have recognized that only by working together can they slay the dragons that threaten their communities. The *Appalachian Reader* tells their stories, and will continue to serve as a voice for social change movements of people in the mountains.

Kristin Layng Szakos is a founder and the editor of the Appalachian Reader, which received a Resist grant last year to increase distribution. A long-time resident of Eastern Kentucky, she now lives in Charlottesville, VA. For information or to subscribe (for \$15), contact Appalachian Reader, 1132 Otter St., Charlottesville, VA 22901.

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Give us a sense of the economy in Big Creek now.

FRANKI: 92% of the children that go to Big Creek District schools receive free or reduced prices of school meals. That means 92% of the families with children live in poverty. The official unemployment rate is around 14%. The unofficial rate is probably triple that.

The biggest thing we're working on is education, because education is the future. We want to give our children a high-quality education and provide alternative education to adults who have been so maltreated by our current educational system that they will never go back to it.

Folks ask me: Franki, how can you organize with all of that? And it's easy. Once folks have lost everything, there's nothing else to risk, so they will take monumental risks to try to recover a decent standard of living. And that's where we are in McDowell County. Like the old Janis Joplin tune says: nothing ain't worth nothing but it's free. We've got nothing left to lose.

In the process of your work, you are challenging the power structure in McDowell County as well.

FRANKI: Well, we've done some in the past and we'll be doing much more in the future! We have put together a group that's called CODE, the Coalition On Democracy Education. None of us born and raised in McDowell County have ever seen real democracy that addresses the needs of the people instead of special interest groups and industry. We're getting people to understand how important their activism is, their speaking up on issues, not only the rights of democracy, but the responsibilities of real democracy.

People in my community have been oppressed for more than 100 years, and they have been told that they are worthless. They have been kept—I think intentionally—uneducated, because an educated work force would not work in the coal mines. We've brought about some real changes in the last two or three elections in McDowell County. The last election is a perfect example. A group of folks who want change said that we were supporting seven candidates for various offices at the local

and state level, and in the last election we won six of those seven positions.

What strengths and obstacles do you encounter in grassroots organizing?

FRANKI: The power structure is a major barrier. Also, we haven't owned anything in our community in over 100 years since the land was stolen.

Could you speak a little bit about how resources are or are not a barrier to organizing, and how you got involved in the Appalachian Community Fund (ACF)?

FRANKI: There are some resources that are not a problem in our community. That's the folks who want to bring about change. Money is a problem. You can't have 92% of your families living in poverty and money not be a problem. Money doesn't always help, but poverty is a problem that money could help. We have lost our whole economic base. We've lost at least 70 or 80% of the jobs in my district, and we aren't replacing those jobs.

With the Big Creek People in Action, we want this new economic development to be socially just and democratic and to lift *all* people in our community. That's how we fit in with the ACF, because that is what ACF stands for in the Appalachian area.

Tell me a little bit about who your role models and mentors are.

FRANKI: I don't think about role models and mentors very much. I think about all of us working together to bring about a better world. I guess my first role model was Martin Luther King, Jr., when I was a child. And then as I got older, I really began to read Gandhi and understand and appreciate what he said.

In the last couple of years, I actually have come to see Pat Summit as a role model. Pat Summit is the Lady Vols basketball coach at the University of Tennessee, and she is the winningest women's coach in the country, with six national championships in her 20 to 25 years coaching. Of all the oppression, in my community women have been oppressed the most. It is just unbelievable how women have not been able to be people in my society and have almost no value and no worth.

As a girl, I loved athletics. And simply

because I was female I could never participate. Pat Summit has just come in the face of all of it and works for a major university, a major bureaucracy. She's shown women that you have value, you can be winners, and that you can be the best in the world. We take the female athletes of McDowell County—including my 12-year-old daughter—to places where they see other females succeeding. Just by doing that we tell them that their options are limitless.

Who are you trying to influence through your organizing?

FRANKI: Oh, everybody! Appalachian people are still considered second class citizens in this country. People think that we're ignorant because we have an accent, and our rural culture is different than the urban culture.

Mostly I want the young people of my community—all races, all creeds, all colors, all sexual orientations, all everything—to understand that there is a different future for them out there than what they have been told. And I want them to understand that life is limitless for them and that the only way that those Appalachian stereotypes will oppress them is if they let them.

Do you think the stereotypes of Appalachia is still a big factor for people?

FRANKI: Absolutely. I want to see a future in Appalachia where all people can work, learn, grow and play together and prepare themselves for the twenty-first century. That's what I want for my community and for my people.

We have a history of working hard and producing, and even though our education was kept at a minimum, we are thinkers. There's a lot of good things about Appalachian people that nobody knows about. I want our region to be valued for its real worth. What we have to do is facilitate the community's ability to bring about those changes. That's what I've worked a long time for in my community, and my work for the Appalachian Community Fund gives me the ability to do that as well.

Gaye Evans is lifelong resident of Appalachia and directs the Appalachian Community Fund. For information, contact ACF, 517 Union Ave, Knoxville, TN 37902.

GRANTS

Resist awards grants six times a year to groups throughout the United States engaged in activism for social and economic justice. In this issue of the *Newsletter* we list a few grant recipients from our February allocation cycle. For more information, contact the groups at the addresses below.

Upper Columbia Human Rights Coalition

Box 635
Colville, WA 99114

Working in the rural tri-county region of Northwest Washington, Upper Columbia Human Rights Coalition (UCHRC) was founded in 1992 in response to an Aryan Nation recruitment drive. UCHRC exposes the agendas of the extreme right (including the Aryan Nation, Christian Identity and various militia groups) and organizes in the community in opposition of racist and bigoted ideologies. The group monitors and disseminates information to the community about the workings of extremist groups, holds bi-monthly educational forums, and works with area youth to support diversity and human rights. Additionally, UCHRC sponsors an annual Fiesta celebration of

diversity to mobilize the community in support of social justice.

A \$1,600 grant from Resist will provide general support for UCHRC's organizing efforts.

Missouri Heartwood

PO Box 7653
Columbia, MO 65205

Missouri Heartwood is a grassroots environmental organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the native forests of the Ozark Highlands. The group addresses the economic and political causes of ecosystem destruction through education and activism. In the past year, two multinational companies opened high-capacity chip mills in the state, introducing highly mechanized clear cutting, which offers little employment and exhausts natural resources quickly. As part of the No Ozarks for Pulp Ever (NOPE) Campaign, Missouri Heartwood is working to educate land owners about the long-term environmental devastation and economic exploitation of the chip mill industry.

A Resist grant of \$1,000 supports the

NOPE campaign to end pulp production in the region.

Peace Action New Mexico

226 Fiesta Street
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Formed in July 1998, Peace Action New Mexico focuses on disarmament and ending nuclear weapons production at Los Alamos National Laboratory and other nuclear facilities in New Mexico. Peace Action also works on a variety of other social justice issues, including ending the sanctions against Iraq; supporting the rights of indigenous peoples in New Mexico, Mexico, and Central America; closing the School of the Americas; abolishing the death penalty; and providing universal health care in the state.

A grant of \$2,000 from Resist will enable Peace Action New Mexico to purchase office equipment, including a computer, printer and fax machine.

Roofless Women

c/o The Women's Institute
14 Beacon Street #608
Boston, MA 02108

Roofless Women is an offshoot of a participatory research group called Roofless Women's Action Research Mobilization (RWARM). Since 1997, Roofless Women has worked to establish a homeless advocacy and leadership development group for women who have experienced homelessness. Last year, with the help of a grant from Resist, Roofless Women developed four pamphlets describing from the perspective of homeless women the experience of being in a shelter, the role of domestic violence, parenting in a shelter, and civil rights for homeless women.

A grant of \$2,000 from Resist will enable Roofless Women to translate these pamphlets into Spanish in order to reach out to the Hispanic homeless population in the Boston area.

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We'd like you to consider becoming a Resist Pledge. Pledges account for over 30% of our income.

By becoming a pledge, you help guarantee Resist a fixed and dependable source of income on which we can build our grant-making program. In return, we will send you a monthly pledge letter and reminder along with your newsletter. We will keep you up-to-date on the groups we have funded and the other work being done at Resist.

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I'll send you my pledge of \$ _____
every month/two months/
quarter/six months (circle one).

☐ Enclosed is an initial pledge contribution of \$ _____.

☐ I can't join the pledge program now, but here's a contribution of \$ _____ to support your work.

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City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

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